

RIVERWAYS

June 24, 2003
News Notes #5

from the Massachusetts Riverways Programs (www.massriverways.org)

Dear River Advocates,

Happy Rivers Month As we make site visits and see you and the rivers you are working on with us to protect and restore, we are once again reminded about the greatness of the Commonwealth's rivers and its cadre of citizen river enthusiasts. Earlier this month, on behalf of Governor Mitt Romney, Secretary Ellen Roy Herzfelder officially proclaimed **June** as **Rivers Month** in Massachusetts. The proclamation was given in Billerica as part of Sudbury Valley Trustees' River Relay—the grand finale of the Sudbury/Assabet/Concord Rivers' Wild and Scenic Riverfest celebration. Although the Concord River served as the backdrop for this event, this proclamation, of course, honors and celebrates all the state's rivers and gives due recognition of their value in our lives as individuals and in our natural as well as human communities.

Not long after its founding in the late 1980s, Riverways became aware of and sought to bring greater attention to the importance of safeguarding naturally-occurring streamflow patterns and volumes as a critical component of maintaining the natural integrity of river systems. An early Riverways publication (1990) by Judy Wagner and Russ Cohen focused on the **value of water conservation** in helping to maintain and restore natural flow regimes in our rivers and streams. Although public awareness of the importance of healthy streamflows for healthy river systems has grown considerably since then, the threat to rivers and streams posed by water withdrawals, diversions and other flow alterations has, unfortunately, continued and, in many places, intensified. We have seen—most poignantly—the flow problems of the Ipswich River, a river nominated by American Rivers as the third most endangered river in the United States. Yet this is only the most high-profile example of a disturbing trend, as we know of and hear from many of you about unnaturally low –or no—instream flow conditions in other rivers, large and small.

Government officials and nonprofit organizations --many watershed associations, fishing groups, stream teams-- have reported that the lack of flow data creates problems for decision makers. Municipal permitting decisions affecting water resources are relying on insufficient, or in some cases, the complete lack of data on how those decisions will affect streamflows. USGS gages, as important as they are, tend to be located along mainstem rivers, while most of the water supply withdrawals and other decisions affect flows in the smaller headwater reaches with no streamflow measurements. Ironically, it is along these headwater streams, often possessing a high degree of ecological value and sensitivity, where new water withdrawals and other development projects are frequently proposed. Yet truly Smart Growth requires sustainable water flows for ecosystems as well as people.

In several watersheds, river/stream advocates have asked for tools to help monitor streamflows combined with high quality protocols and quality controls. The Massachusetts Instream Flow Task Force has recommended the establishment of a science-based citizen monitoring effort. In response, Margaret Kearns, Riverways' Watershed Ecologist, is working with USGS, other federal agencies, state and nonprofit scientists to design and implement a science-based monitoring program.

As the summer—traditionally low instream flow months and the most stressful times for fish and other aquatic organisms-- approaches, Riverways plans the beginning of a pilot citizen-based streamflow monitoring program, which we have named the **River Instream Flow Stewards ("RIFLS")**. We have approached two watersheds—the Housatonic and the South Coastal - to see if there is interest in becoming an active participant in RIFLS. The response is very enthusiastic, and once we are grant-funded, we will be able to begin to meet the demand. For now, we will take

our first steps. Riverways is very fortunate to have Watershed Ecologist Margaret Kearns—who brings her scientific background in instream flow and aquatic systems—available to lead this effort.

Our lead article in this edition of *Riverways NewsNotes* describes RIFLS and Riverways' ongoing work to gather instream flow data to inform decision making and to protect and restore the healthy streamflows that healthy rivers need. Thanks to your positive feedback, this lead article is followed by another meaty **Resources and Grants** section. As usual, some of the **grant proposal deadlines** are fast approaching, so you may want to quickly skim that section today. We look forward to seeing you out on the rivers on these long summer days....

Joan Kimball

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RIFLS: River Instream Flow Stewards get their feet wet

After more than nine months of planning, Riverways is ready to unveil our newest service to help our constituents protect and restore their rivers – **River Instream Flow Stewards (RIFLS)**. While the process is modeled after our successful Adopt-A-Stream and Lake Watershed Stewardship programs, **RIFLS is an innovative, science-based program aimed at addressing an environmental problem that has yet to receive the attention it deserves: the harm caused to rivers and streams by depleted and/or altered streamflows.** The program's goals include training and supporting volunteers to collect high quality, useful data and creating an on-line resource to allow universal access to the data through the Internet. The data will be available for use by decision-makers at all levels of government.

RIFLS will bring together a diverse group of partners and provide technical assistance for documenting stream flow to protect and restore more natural flows and the aquatic communities they support.

Stream flow and water quantity were hot topics during last year's drought, but even if it continues to rain every weekend for the rest of the year some rivers and streams are still likely to run dangerously low or dry during late summer and early fall. Although streams and rivers in Massachusetts are naturally low at that time of year, poor water management techniques such as excessive lawn watering, leaky pipes, sewers that discharge to other watersheds, manipulation of flows at dams, and urban sprawl can exacerbate low flow conditions and cause additional stress or even death to aquatic organisms and communities.

Riverways' **Low Flow Inventory** currently includes 203 citations that describe unnaturally low flows on sections of 132 rivers in 23 of Massachusetts' 24 major watersheds! The Low Flow Inventory is an on-going compilation of reports and observations describing human-caused, abnormally low flows in rivers and streams across the Commonwealth along with their physical and biological impacts. On 47% of these rivers, the cause of the problem is unknown and requires further investigation. Of the rivers with known causes of unnaturally low flow, 58% were attributed to excessive water withdrawals, from both ground and surface waters. The next largest culprit was poor dam operations, which caused another 35% of known low flow problems. Others were attributed to hydropower facilities, changes in land use that increase stormwater runoff and reduce groundwater recharge, and sewers that discharge wastewater to other watersheds.

To learn more about low flow issues in your watershed, visit the **Low Flow Inventory** website at www.state.ma.us/dfwele/RIVER/rivLow_Flow_Inventory/home.html. If you have new observations or reports to add to the collection please contact Margaret Kearns, Watershed Ecologist, at (617) 626-1533 or margaret.kearns@state.ma.us.

Our River Instream Flow Stewards will begin to address some of the stream flow problems identified in our Low Flow Inventory by collecting high quality data that will help planners and river advocates identify the sources of unnatural low flow conditions and implement appropriate solutions. Currently, most volunteer groups and watershed associations don't monitor the quantity of water in their rivers, largely because of the technical difficulty of developing the "rating curve", or the relationship between water depth and stream flow. Across the nation, RIFLS will be one of the few programs that assists and encourages volunteers and watershed associations to collect stream flow data of this quality by helping to develop rating curves that will accurately relate stream depth to stream flow.

RIFLS flow data may be used in a variety of contexts. For example, flow data can be useful for explaining observed biological impairments in rivers, such as riverine fish communities that are dominated by pond-loving fish instead of river-loving fish. In situations like these, stream flow data may be used to set restoration goals and evaluate progress toward them. Stream flow data is also used by state officials who evaluate the environmental effects of Interbasin Transfer and Water Management permits. Local data may be able to replace generalized models or estimations and allow permit reviewers to better predict the potential impacts of proposed projects. RIFLS volunteers will be able to document stream flow downstream of dams as a basis for evaluating management procedures. Even a single year's worth of data collection may yield enough insight to document the need for more in-depth study and increase the chances that restoration activities will receive funding. Most importantly, the collection and public accessibility of RIFLS stream flow data will increase awareness of the importance of healthy flows in our rivers and build a statewide constituency for maintaining and restoring more natural stream flows.

The pilot RIFLS program will begin this summer in the Housatonic River Watershed and the South Coastal Watershed, where our fleet of partners and volunteers will record water depths in their rivers. Riverways staff will train the network of volunteers to make these measurements and enter them into a publicly-accessible, Internet-based database. Riverways staff will then develop the rating curve for each site by making a series of stream flow measurements that relate water depth to the actual amount of water flowing in the river. Finally, local steering committees will review the data and develop action plans to address any problems that are identified.

The solutions to low flow problems can often be complex, but fortunately there are a wide variety of choices that encourage groundwater recharge and healthy stream flow. Everything from decentralized sewage treatment options to on-site stormwater retention strategies to alternatives to lake drawdowns can be potential solutions to low stream flow problems. RIFLS partners, volunteers, and steering committees will be challenged with the task of not only collecting meticulous stream flow data, but also weighing the potential solutions for their river and community. Armed with high quality RIFLS stream flow data, they will be ready to engage local, state and federal decision-makers to protect and restore healthy stream flows and the riverine communities that depend on them.

To learn more about RIFLS and/or to nominate your watershed to be a participant in the next phase of the RIFLS program (depending on the outcome of pending grant proposals), please contact Margaret at (617) 626-1533 or margaret.kearns@state.ma.us.

RESOURCES AND GRANTS

Grants

FishAmerica Foundation/NOAA Restoration Center: The **American Sportfishing Association's** (ASA) FishAmerica Foundation (<http://www.fishamerica.org>) invites proposals for the second round of citizen-driven habitat restoration projects in 2003 under its partnership with the NOAA Community-based Restoration Program. The partnership requests proposals for local efforts to accomplish meaningful, “on-the-ground” restoration of marine, estuarine and riparian habitats, including salt marshes, seagrass beds and freshwater habitats important to anadromous fish species. Projects must result in on-the-ground habitat restoration, clearly demonstrate significant benefits to marine, estuarine or anadromous fisheries resources, particularly sportfish, and must involve community participation through an educational or volunteer component tied to the restoration activities. Where possible, participation of NOAA staff is encouraged to strengthen the development and implementation of sound restoration projects. Deadline for submission of proposals: **August 11, 2003** by 5:00 PM.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is working to expand and strengthen its partnership with the **Natural Resources Conservation Service** (NRCS) to support innovative and effective conservation and stewardship of our country's private lands. The goal of the partnership is to support high quality projects that engage private landowners, primarily farmers and ranchers, in the conservation and enhancement of fish and wildlife and natural resources on their lands. Grants typically range from \$10,000-\$150,000, based upon need. Although matching funds on a 1:1 basis are required, 2:1 or better matching funds are encouraged and makes for a more competitive project. Match must be from a non-federal source. Partnerships encouraged. Full Proposal Deadline is due **July 15, 2003**, but a project description run by the appropriate regional office (for Mass. the contact is Lucy Wallace, Special Projects Coordinator, (978) 443-0498) is strongly encouraged prior to submitting a full proposal. For more information, go on-line to <http://nfwf.org/programs/nrcsnacd.htm>.

The Ben & Jerry's Foundation “offers competitive grants to non-for-profit, grassroots organizations throughout the United States which facilitate progressive social change by addressing the underlying conditions of societal and environmental problems... Generally only organizations with budgets under \$250,000 are funded... Only organizations with 501(c)3 status, or who have a sponsoring agency with this status are eligible.” Full grants: \$1000- \$15,000. Small Grants for less than \$1000. First step is to send Letter of Interest (LOI). Responses generally take 8-10 weeks so must be received well in advance of proposal deadline. Should submit LOI by **mid- August 2003** (earlier is better) for review in time to submit a proposal, if invited, by **Nov 1, 2003**. See guidelines: <http://www.benjerry.com/foundation/guidelines.html>

The **Jessie B. Cox Charitable Trust** (<http://www.agmconnect.org/cox.html>) funds projects in New England in the

areas of health, education and the environment and is particularly interested in projects that primarily benefit underserved populations and disadvantaged communities in New England, as well as projects that focus on prevention rather than remediation. The trust is also interested in fostering collaborations among nonprofit organizations. Grant awards range from \$25,000 - \$ 75,000 (average award = \$ 35,000). The deadline to submit concept papers for next trustees meeting is **July 15** (the next deadline is **October 15**), **2003**. For more information, contact: Katherine S. McHugh, Director or Susan M. Fish, Grants Administrator, Donor Services Office (dso@hembar.com), Hemenway & Barnes, 60 State Street, Boston, MA 02109-1899, (617) 557-9775.

The **New England Grassroots Environment Fund** (NEGEF) is a small grants program designed to foster and give voice to grassroots environmental initiatives in the six New England states. They provide grants of up to \$2,500 to fuel civic engagement, local activism, and social change. NEGEF funds community involvement in projects that address a wide range of environmental issues including: agriculture, air quality, alternative energy, aquifer protection, biotechnology, community gardens, environmental justice, energy conservation, forestry, global warming, land trusts, marine environment, public health, sprawl, sustainable communities, toxics and hazardous waste, trails, water quality, watershed management, wetlands, wildlife, and youth-organized environmental work. NEGEF was created to assist groups who are not being reached by traditional funders. NEGEF's user-friendly web page (<http://www.grassrootsfund.org>) is worth checking out, as it contains on-line versions of NEGEF's current and past newsletters and a recommended reading list for potential grantees as well as links to grant recipients sorted by resource type (water, e.g.). For more information, contact Cheryl King Fischer, Executive Director, at (802) 223-4622. The next submission deadline is **Sept 15, 2003** for a November decision.

The **Bay State Federal Savings Charitable Foundation** supports educational and stewardship activities for civic projects in communities in which the Bay State Federal Savings Bank operates (Boston, Brookline, Dedham, Norwood, Westwood, Walpole, and "outlying areas"). Watershed groups have received grants in the past. Grants are for Non-profit entities. Requests for up to \$3000 may be made directly to a branch and/or foundation offices and are considered on a rolling basis. Requests for more than \$3000 must be sent to the Foundation and are reviewed quarterly. Maximum grant size is \$50,000, but the typical size is more in the range of \$3000 - \$25,000. Contact: Susan R. Kelliher, Executive Director, The Bay State Federal Savings, 1299 Beacon Street, Brookline, MA 02446, (617)739-9577.

The **Orchard Foundation** funds projects in New England and New York in the following areas: "air quality, biodiversity, fresh and coastal waters, forests, toxic substances and pollution prevention. Advocacy, principally legal, governmental agencies, and administrative process participation advocacy projects are strongly encouraged and given preference. The Orchard Foundation favors organizations with a demonstrated competency in specific skills such as litigation, technology, scientific advocacy, or coalition building. The foundation favors organizations with local and national ties, either through networks, chapters or other affiliations. Finally, the foundation favors organizations with a demonstrated strong base of citizen and activist support." *Areas not funded* include general citizen organizing and public awareness-building projects, environmental education projects (for adults or children), ocean fisheries, growth management and sprawl, energy (except for dams), animal rights, animal hospitals or rehabilitation centers, species-specific projects, scientific research, and land acquisition. Grants generally range from \$3000- \$15,000. Deadline for submission of one page Concept Letter is **September 1, 2003**. You are strongly advised to visit the foundation's web page at <http://home.maine.rr.com/orchard/> for the most up-to-date grant guidelines and priorities.

This past spring, the **Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences** produced *Conserving Open Space: A guide for obtaining funding*, a one-stop resource to help groups seeking financial support for open space purchase and management. *Conserving Open Space* is specifically designed to help find funding for projects in Southeastern Massachusetts, but will also be helpful to groups working in other parts of the State. Conserving Open Space will lead organizations to a variety of possible funding sources a time when state and local funding is less readily available. *Conserving Open Space* is available for free download (three .pdf files) from <http://www.manomet.org/regional/resources/> . For more information, contact Paul M. Cavanagh, Ph.D., Regional Conservation Planning Program Director, (508) 224-6521 or

pcavanagh@manomet.org.

Founded in 1956, the **Foundation Center** (<http://fdncenter.org/>) is the nation's leading authority on philanthropy and is dedicated to serving grantseekers, grantmakers, researchers, policymakers, the media, and the general public. Its mission is to support and improve philanthropy by promoting public understanding of the field and helping grantseekers succeed. To achieve its mission, the center collects, organizes, and communicates information on U.S. philanthropy; conducts and facilitates research on trends in the field; provides education and training on the grantseeking process; and ensures public access to information and services through its website, print and electronic publications, five library/learning centers, and a national network of Cooperating Collections. The Center's content-rich website provides some 27,000 visitors daily with information on grantmakers and their giving, education in grantseeking and nonprofit management, and news and research on philanthropy. One of the website's functions is to help locate foundations in one's area(s) of interest; for example, http://fdncenter.org/funders/grantmaker/gws_comm/comm_ma.html provides descriptions and links to a number of Massachusetts' community foundations.

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ON-LINE RESOURCES, PUBLICATIONS AND CALENDAR

Earth Force and GREEN

<http://www.earthforce.org>

Formed in the mid-1990s by the **Pew Charitable Trusts**, Earth Force is a corporation shaped by and for young people. Through Earth Force, youth discover and implement lasting solutions to environmental issues in their community. In the process they develop life-long habits of active citizenship and environmental stewardship. Educators turn to Earth Force for innovative tools to engage young people in community problem solving. One of Earth Force's initiatives, **The Global Rivers Environmental Education Network (GREEN)**, (<http://www.green.org>), helps young people protect the rivers, streams and other vital water resources in their communities. This program merges hands-on, scientific learning with civic action. GREEN offers educators and watershed organizations a family of integrated services and tools to engage youth in improving their water resources. The full spectrum of integrated GREEN tools is useful to anyone looking to monitor and protect rivers, streams, lakes and oceans everywhere. They work together to assist youth, educators and watershed organizations work effectively at each step of the protection process.

Green Guide

<http://www.thegreenguide.com/issue.mhtml>

Put out by the nonprofit **Green Guide Institute** since 1994, the *Green Guide* is a bi-monthly newsletter (available by mail or on-line) that offers cutting-edge reporting on environmental and health issues of immediate importance to consumers as well as hands-on, practical solutions that include everything from product reports that will help you make shopping choices to responsible consumer and citizen actions. The Green Guide is brief and focused, an information destination with all facts rigorously researched and verified. Although you need to pay a subscription fee to access all on-line content, some archived articles are free (see, e.g., "A Tale of Two Watersheds" at <http://www.thegreenguide.com/doc.mhtml?i=59&s=watersheds>).

Groundwater Foundation

<http://www.groundwater.org/>

The Groundwater Foundation is a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to informing the public about one of our greatest hidden resources, groundwater. Since 1985, its programs and publications present the benefits everyone

receives from groundwater and the risks that threaten groundwater quality. One of the Foundation's most helpful services is *Recharge Report*, a periodic, breezy and informative on-line newsletter devoted to groundwater and related topics. The May 2003 edition of *Recharge Report* includes some useful data on the value of trees in both reducing and cleaning storm water runoff as well as articles on how several communities are meeting the challenge of addressing the problem of "urban slobber" running off from built-up areas. To get a free subscription to *Recharge Report*, go-on-line to <http://www.groundwater.org/Foundation/rechargereport.htm>.

MassAnswers 24/7 Reference Service

<http://www.massanswers.org>

"A Professional Librarian, on Your Computer, at Your Convenience", MassAnswers is an innovative service that lets you ask questions and get answers, on-line in real time, from reference staff at some of the best libraries across Massachusetts and the nation. This system combines the immediacy of the telephone and the preciseness of written e-mail with the ability to "look over" the librarian's shoulder and see what he or she sees on screen. Once you submit a question at the MassAnswers website, it will be picked up by a Massachusetts Librarian from one of the MassAnswers participating libraries. This web page also explains how libraries can help you in your own self-directed Internet research projects. For example, Massachusetts libraries have purchased subscriptions to a wealth of online resources, enabling anyone with a Library card from a participating library to access full-text articles from thousands of magazines for free.

Mass. Department of Public Health (DPH) Division of Community Sanitation

<http://www.state.ma.us/dph/dcs/stormfct.htm>

With all the rain we've been having lately, you might find this on-line information to be of particular value. The Mass. DPH's Storm Fact Sheet contains useful advice on how to protect persons and property from the potentially harmful effects of flooding and flood-borne pathogens.

MassGIS (Geographic Information System)

<http://www.state.ma.us/mgis/massgis.htm>

MassGIS is the Commonwealth's Office of Geographic and Environmental Information, within the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. Through MassGIS, the Commonwealth has created a comprehensive, statewide database of spatial information for environmental planning and management. Recent updates to MassGIS's website include the following: True-color *aerial ortho imagery*- statewide, captured in April 2001, is available for the entire mainland and these color images are available via free download from the Mass GIS website. The imagery may be accessed in three ways: 1) Order the data on CD-ROM as large, regional mosaics in the MrSID image format; 2) Download - for free! - smaller tiles (4 km. x 4 km.) from MassGIS' Web site (1/2- and 1-meter resolution MrSID files); 3) View the imagery online in the "MassGIS 2001 Color Ortho Imagery Viewer" Complete details, sample images, and links for ordering, download, and the online viewer may be found at <http://www.state.ma.us/mgis/new-colororthos.htm>. The *Open Space Data Layer* is periodically updated; check http://www.state.ma.us/mgis/osp_updates.htm for a list of all recent updates. The See http://www.state.ma.us/mgis/st_wet.htm for the latest 1:5,000 *Wetlands and Streams* data layers status map, a list of the updated tiles and links to free data download. The Public Water Supply (PWS) Sources data layer is at <http://www.state.ma.us/mgis/pws.htm>. The statewide layer formerly known as Rail Trails has been extensively updated and is now known as "Bicycle Trails" (see <http://www.mass.gov/mgis/biketrails.htm>). Last but not least, MassGIS puts out a "*GISette*", a bi-monthly newsletter emailed to its users and partner agencies to keep them informed of data updates and on-going technology developments.

Massachusetts Water Watch Partnership (MassWWP)

<http://www.masswwp.org>

The Massachusetts Water Watch Partnership provides training and other technical assistance to citizen organizations who conduct water quality monitoring programs on the lakes, rivers, and estuaries of Massachusetts. Mass. WWP's new URL is now easier to memorize and will take you to the same place (no need to update your bookmarks or links). Their

on-line publications are reorganized and updated into a "virtual library" at <http://www.masswwp.org/publicat.html> - making it easier to locate specific documents. When looking for funding, check <http://www.masswwp.org/funding.html>. The "Calendar" section announces upcoming monitoring-related courses and other events, e.g., the **Stream Health and Aquatic Macroinvertebrates** training sessions on **July 12-13** and **July 26-27** in Amherst.

RiverMorph

<http://www.rivermorph.com/>

Natural channel river restoration can be a complex process, often requiring detailed knowledge of how rivers work (otherwise known as fluvial geomorphology). **RiverMorph** is a computer software program that is designed to help users restore natural stream reaches. The software may be particularly helpful in comparing various alternative restoration proposals. Version 2 of RiverMorph was recently released – free, on-line "webinars" explaining how the software works are scheduled about two times per month – free, limited use demo versions of the software are also available via CD or (soon) on-line. Call (866) 748-6673 toll free for more info.

Save Our Environment Action Center

<http://www.saveourevironment.org>

This comprehensive website is a collaborative effort of 21 of the nation's largest and most influential environmental advocacy organizations, harnessing the power of the Internet to increase public awareness and activism on today's most important environmental issues. You can use the action center to make your voice heard in the crucial battles to protect our air and water; our lands, forests, and oceans; our wildlife; our children's future; and our planet's climate.

Watershed Geeks Chat Forum

http://www.cwp.org/Watershed_Geeks.htm

Got a question about a certain stormwater practice, looking for resources, or want to share your information or experience? Visit the **Center for Watershed Protection's** new Watershed Geeks Chat Forum, intended to foster a community of engineers, planners, environmentalists, and others with an interest in watershed protection practices. Use Watershed Geeks to check in with Center staff, ask a question that's got you stumped, give feedback on what's happening in your community, or post information of interest to the general stormwater and watershed communities. Watershed Geeks is a moderated public forum open to everyone.

Zoomer

<http://zoomer.sierraclub.org/>

Zoomer is an on-line environmental information service sponsored by the **Sierra Club**. It's free and available to everyone (Sierra Club membership not necessary). The impressive content on this website, put together from a wide range of sources, is all sorted by zip code. Use Zoomer to zoom in on useful tips and news about the environment in your neighborhood. For example, you can use Zoomer to find out where to take old paint cans, check out the day's pollen count, learn about local wildlife and the location of local organic farms (good) as well as nearby hazardous waste sites (not so good). (P.S.: Elsewhere on the Sierra Club website (<http://www.sierraclub.org/wetlands/legislation.asp>) you can learn about important proposed federal legislation that would retain the assertion of federal jurisdiction over isolated wetlands and non-navigable streams for the purposes of the federal Clean Water Act, responding to the U.S. Supreme Court's recent "SWANCC" decision and subsequent efforts by the Bush Administration to reduce federal Clean Water Act jurisdiction.)

Publications

While the abundant rainfall this spring may have (for the time being) reduced lawn sprinkler use and the resultant strain

on municipal water supplies and aquatic ecosystems, conventionally managed lawns and yards continue to put a strain on the environment through increased nutrient and chemical loadings to waterways and degraded wildlife habitat, not to mention the strain on homeowners' wallets and/or leisure time. There is, however, a growing interest among homeowners in Massachusetts and elsewhere in exploring alternatives to the traditional lawn.

In response to this trend, the Mass. Executive Office of Environmental Affairs recently put out a publication entitled *More Than Just a Yard: Ecological Landscaping Tools for Massachusetts Homeowners*. Compiled by Tufts University student and EOEA intern Jessica Sprajcar, assisted by several state agency personnel (including Riverways' Russ Cohen), *More Than Just a Yard* seeks to encourage a shift away from the conventional approach to house lot landscaping of mowed turf and clipped hedges to a more environmentally-friendly and ecologically functional design and maintenance.

This 64-page document presents a "step-by-step" approach of converting a conventional yard to one that looks and functions much more like a natural landscape. The guide is replete with examples of yards that have successfully made a partial or complete transformation from lawn to a more diverse planting scheme that adds visual interest and wildlife benefits as well as (eventually) resulting in little or no need for watering, fertilizers, pesticides or other maintenance. The back of the guide provides a large number of sources of additional help (many of which are available on-line) for homeowners ready to adopt one or more ecological landscaping techniques, such as a list of native species and their value as food for wildlife and/or humans, as well as a list of invasive species to avoid.

Unfortunately, due to the Commonwealth's current fiscal condition, *More Than Just a Yard* is only available as an on-line, .pdf document at the present time. There's a jump to the document from EOEA's web page, or you can just click on http://www.state.ma.us/envir/mwrc/pdf/More_Than_Just_Yard.pdf.

In a similar vein, Yale University Press (<http://www.yale.edu/yup>) has published a second edition of *Redesigning the American Lawn: A Search for Environmental Harmony*. This extensively researched and documented book explains the origins of America's fondness for manicured turf lawns (which the authors refer to as the "industrial" lawn) and how our natural environment has and continues to suffer for it. The latter portion of the book presents many inspiring examples of individuals, organizations, government entities, educational institutions, businesses and others seeking to and (in many cases) succeeding in subverting the dominant paradigm through breaking their lawn's chemical addictions to fertilizers and pesticides, xeriscaping (i.e., water-conserving landscaping) and other more environmentally-friendly alternatives. *Redesigning the American Lawn* (178pp., 2001, \$16.95) is available for purchase on-line at a reduced sale price of \$13.50 (until **June 30**) at <http://www.yale.edu/yup/mscat4.htm#landscape>.

Calendar

River Network and the **Center for Watershed Protection** are co-sponsoring a **Watershed Restoration Institute** to be held from **Sept. 21-26** at the Pearlstone Retreat Center in Reistertown, MD (<http://www.pearlstonecenter.org/Welcome.htm>). The Institute is an intensive program to equip local urban watershed leaders with the skills and tools to plan, design and implement effective restoration programs in their home watersheds. The Institute features both classroom time and hands-on field instruction covering watershed assessment and mapping techniques; watershed inventory and restoration strategies; and organizational development and management skills. While the focus of the Institute is on urban watershed issues, participants from primarily rural or agricultural watersheds with restoration needs are welcome to attend as well. Most of the sessions at the Institute are interactive, with hands-on training both in the field and in computer labs. Lecturing will be kept to a minimum, and additional time will be allocated to focus on local issues in participants' home watersheds in small group settings. With approximately 80 participants expected, the Institute also presents a valuable networking opportunity. Tuition for the Watershed Institute is \$1,800 (scholarships for non-profits are available on a sliding scale) – registration deadline is **July 1**. For more information, contact Heather

Holland (hkh@cw.org) or Stephanie Sprinkle (sll@cw.org), (410) 461-8323 or go on-line to <http://www.cw.org>.

Stormwater Management in Cold Climates: Planning, Design, Implementation is the title of a conference to be held from **November 3-5** in Portland, Maine. The conference will bring together engineers, planners, municipal and other government personnel, stormwater managers, natural resource professionals, contractors and developers to share approaches to effective stormwater management in cold climates. Special attention will be given to the NPDES Phase II stormwater regulations and the challenges that communities face in implementing them. The conference includes two days of plenary and concurrent sessions with moderated presentations and panel discussions, field trips, pre-conference training, and ample time for exhibitor interaction and networking. A call for presenters and exhibits vendors is currently out (abstract submissions are due **June 27**). For more information, contact Karen Young at (207) 780-4820 or go on-line to <http://www.cascobay.usm.maine.edu/coldsw.html>.

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Patricia Sheppard, Assistant Director

Russ Cohen, Rivers Advocate

Rachel Calabro, Adopt-A-Stream Coordinator

Cindy Delpapa, Urban Rivers Coordinator

Karen Peltó, River Restore Coordinator

Special Funding:

Amy Singler, Stream Team Organizer

Carrie Banks, Stream Team Organizer Western MA

Michael Merrill, River Restore Technical Assistance

Margaret Kearns, Watershed Ecologist

Eileen Goldberg, Small Grants Administrator

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Date Last Update: June 25, 2003

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